Fante dialect

Fante (Akan: [ˈfɑnti]), also known as **Fanti**, **Fantse**, or **Mfantse**, is one of the three principal members of the <u>Akan</u> <u>dialect continuum</u>, along with <u>Asante</u> and <u>Akuapem</u>, the latter two collectively known as <u>Twi</u>, with which it is <u>mutually intelligible</u>.[3] It is spoken in the central and southern regions of <u>Ghana</u>, as well as in settlements in other regions in western Ghana.[4]

Fante is the common <u>dialect</u> of the <u>Fante people</u>, whose communities each have their own <u>subdialects</u>, such as Agona, Anomabo, Abura, and Gomoa,[5] all of which are mutually intelligible. Schacter and Fromkin describe two main Fante dialect groups: Fante 1, which uses a syllable-final /w/ and thus distinguishes *kaw* ("dance") and *ka* ("bite"); and Fante 2, where these words are homophonous.[3] A standardized form of Fante is taught in primary and secondary schools.[4] Many Fantes are <u>bilingual</u> or <u>bidialectal</u> and most can speak <u>Twi</u>.[6]

Notable speakers include <u>Cardinal Peter Appiah Turkson</u>,[7] <u>Jane Naana Opoku-Agyemang</u>, former United Nations Secretary General <u>Kofi Annan</u>,[8][9] and former Ghanaian presidents <u>Kwame Nkrumah</u> and <u>John Atta Mills</u>.[10][11]. <u>Maya Angelou</u>,[12][13] learned Fante as an adult during her stay in Ghana.

One striking characteristic of Fante is the level of <u>English</u> influence, including English loanwords and <u>anglicized</u> forms of native names, due both to British colonial influence and "to fill lexical and semantic gaps, for reasons of simplicity and also for prestige". Examples of such borrowings include *rɛkɔso* ("records"), *rɔba* "rubber", *nɔma* ("number"), *kolapuse* "collapse", and *dɛkuleti* "decorate".[14] Native names are occasionally anglicized, such as "Mɛnsa" becoming "Mensah" or "Atta" becoming "Arthur".[15] Many people consider European Christian missionaries and schools the cause of this anglicization.

Contents

Fante	
Fante	
Native to	Ghana
Ethnicity	Fante people
Native speakers	2.7 million (2019)[1]

Language family	Niger–Congo
	• Atlantic–Congo
	  • Kwa
	    • Potou–Tano
	    • Tano
	      • Central Tano
	        • Akan
	          • **Fante**

Official status	
Regulated by	Akan Orthography Committee
Language codes	
ISO 639-2	`fat` (https://www.loc.gov/standards/iso639-2/php/langcodes_name.php?code_ID=138)
ISO 639-3	`fat`
Glottolog	`fant1241` (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/fant1241)[2]

Etymology

The name "Fante" has two possible etymologies, both in reference to the neighbouring <u>Asante people</u>. The first states that the Fante were named for their custom of eating spinach, or *efan*, while the Asante ate another herb called *san*; the second, that the Fante split from the Asante, receiving the name *ofa-tew*, "the half that separated". However, as well as being phonetically inconsistent, any connection these etymologies propose with the Asante is anachronistic: the Asante rose to power in the late 17th and early 18th centuries, and the Fante-Asante dichotomy only developed in the latter part of the 18th century, while the name "Fante" is much older.[16] The true etymology is unknown.

Phonology

Consonants

		Labial		Alveolar		Pre-palatal		Palatal		Velar		Glottal	
		plain	labialized	plain	labialized	plain	labialized	plain	labialized	plain	labialized	plain	labialized
Nasal	plain	m		n	nʷ			ɲ	ɲʷ				
Plosive/	**voiceless**	p	pʷ	t	tʷ	tɕ	tɕʷ [tɕᶣ]			k	kʷ	ʔ	
affricate	**voiced**	b	bʷ	d	dʷ	dʑ	dʑʷ [dʑᶣ]			g	gʷ		
Fricative		f		s	sʷ	ɕ	ɕʷ [ɕᶣ]					h	hʷ
Approximant				r				j			w		

Vowels

	Front	**Central**	**Back**
Close	i		u
Near-close	ɪ		ʊ
Close-mid	e		o
Open-mid	ɛ		ɔ
Open		a	

Of these vowels, five may be nasalized: /ĩ/, /ɪ̃/, /ã/, /ũ/, and /ʊ̃/.[17][18]

Fante exhibits vowel harmony, where all vowels in a word belong to one of the two sets /i e o u a/ or /ɪ ɛ ɔ ʊ a/.[18]

Tones

Fante, like all other varieties of Akan, has two contrastive tones, high tone (H) and low tone (L).[19]

Orthography

Fante has a relatively phonemic orthography. It uses the following letters to indicate the following phonemes:[18]

Uppercase	A	B	D	E	Ɛ	F	G	H	I	K	M	N	O	Ɔ	P	R	S	T	U	W	Y	Z
Lowercase	a	b	d	e	ɛ	f	g	h	i	k	m	n	o	ɔ	p	r	s	t	u	w	y	z
Phoneme	/a/	/b/	/d/	/e/, /ɪ/	/ɛ/	/f/	/g/	/h/	/i/	/k/	/m/	/n/	/o/, /ʊ/	/ɔ/	/p/	/r/	/s/	/t/	/u/	/w/	/j/	/z/

Consonants

Fante makes heavy use of digraphs, including *ky* (/tɕ/), *gy* (/dʑ/), *hy* (/ɕ/), *tw* (/tɕʷ/), *dw* (/dʑʷ/), *hw* (/ɕʷ/), and *kw* (/kʷ/). However, labialization is symbolized in other labialized consonants either with ⟨u⟩, e.g. *pue* (/pʷei/), *bue* (/bʷei/), *tue* (/tʷei/), *hue* (/hʷei/), *huan* (/hʷan/), *guan* (/gʷan/), *nua* (/nʷia/), and *sua* (/sʷia/); or with ⟨o⟩, e.g. *soer* (/sʷer/), *soe* (/sʷei/), and *noa* (/nʷia/). Furthermore, the digraphs *ny* and *nw* may represent /ɲ/ and /ɲʷ/, respectively, as in *nya* (/ɲa/) ("get"), and *nwin* (/ɲʷin/) ("leak"), parallelling the use of other digraphs in Fante; or they may represent two individual phonemes, /nj/ and /nw/ respectively, as in *nwaba* (/nwaba/) "snail".

Fante also uses the digraphs *ts* and *dz*, which represent /ts/ and /dz/ in Fante subdialects that distinguish the plosives /t/ and /d/ and the affricates /ts/ and /dz/, but are allophonic with *t* and *d* in those subdialects which do not distinguish them. Fante is the only dialect of Akan to distinguish /ts/ and /dz/ from /t/ and /d/, and is therefore the only dialect whose alphabet contains the letter ⟨z⟩.[18]

Vowels

Although ⟨e⟩ and ⟨o⟩ can represent multiple phonemes each, Fante orthography uses two strategies to distinguish them. First, Fante vowel harmony means /e/ and /ɪ/ are not likely to appear together in a word, nor are /o/ and /ʊ/. Second, if disambiguation is necessary, vowel digraphs may be used: ⟨ie⟩ to mean /e/ and ⟨uo⟩ to mean /o/. Thus /moko/ "pepper" is spelled *muoko*, while /mʊkʊ/ "I sit" is spelled *muko*.

Nasalization is marked with the diacritic ⟨ ̃⟩, but is only used when distinguishing "one of two or more words of the same spelling but different meanings which contain a nasal vowel",[20] and is omitted when there is no danger of ambiguity. The diacritic may also be included on the wrong vowel, as in the word *kẽka*, where it is the second syllable that actually receives the nasalization.[18]

References

1. Akan (https://www.ethnologue.com/language/aka) at *Ethnologue* (22nd ed., 2019)
2. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Fante" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/fant1241). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
3. Schacter, Paul; Fromkin, Victoria (1968). *A Phonology of Akan: Akuapem, Asante, Fante*. Los Angeles: UC Press. p. 3.
4. "Akan" (https://www.ethnologue.com/language/aka). *Ethnologue*. Retrieved 2019-12-22.
5. "Fanti - MultiTree" (http://www.multitree.org/codes/fat.html). *www.multitree.org*. Retrieved 2019-12-23.
6. Abakah, Emmanuel Nicholas (2004). "Elision in Fante" (https://www.utbildning.gu.se/digitalAssets/1324/1324075_elision-in-fante.pdf) (PDF). *Africa & Asia*: 181–213.
7. Jones, Sam; Hirsch, Afua (2013-02-11). "Who will be the next pope? The contenders for Vatican's top job" (https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/feb/11/next-pope-contenders-vatican-job). *The Guardian*. ISSN 0261-3077 (https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0261-3077). Retrieved 2019-12-22.
8. "William Shawcross - UK : official personal website" (https://web.archive.org/web/20140114194400/http://www.williamshawcross.com/index.php?page=annan). 2014-01-14. Archived from the original (http://www.williamshawcross.com/index.php?page=annan) on 2014-01-14. Retrieved 2019-12-22.
9. "Kofi Annan | Biography & Facts" (https://www.britannica.com/biography/Kofi-Annan). *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved 2019-12-22.
10. Welmers, William Everett (1946). *A Descriptive Grammar of Fanti*. Linguistic Society of America. p. 7.
11. "John Atta Mills: Death of an African leader" (https://web.archive.org/web/20130601233735/http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=93356:john-atta-mills-death-of-an-african-leader&catid=73:policy-a-politics&Itemid=607). 2013-06-01. Archived from the original (http://www.ngrguardiannews.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=93356:john-atta-mills-death-of-an-african-leader&catid=73:policy-a-politics&Itemid=607) on 2013-06-01. Retrieved 2019-12-22.
12. Hambleton, Laura (2011-10-24). "Celebrated poet Maya Angelou speaks about a life well and creatively lived" (https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/celebrated-poet-maya-angelou-speaks-about-a-life-well-and-creatively-lived/2011/10/18/gIQAYhFSDM_story.html). *Washington Post*. ISSN 0190-8286 (https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0190-8286). Retrieved 2019-12-22.
13. Drezen, Anna; Angelou, Maya (2018). "American Masters - The Poet: Dr. Maya Angelou" (https://www.pbs.org/wnet/americanmasters/api/ajax/?template=ajax-printable&id=9853). *www.pbs.org*. PBS. Retrieved 2019-12-22.
14. Apenteng, Monica Amoah; Amfo, Nana Aba Appiah (2014). "The Form and Function of English Loanwords in Akan" (https://www.njas.fi/njas/article/view/138). *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. **23**: 219–240.
15. Agyekum, Kofi (2006-12-31). "The Sociolinguistic of Akan Personal Names" (https://njas.fi/njas/article/view/24). *Nordic Journal of African Studies*. **15** (2). ISSN 1459-9465 (https://www.worldcat.org/issn/1459-9465).
16. *Landscapes, Sources and Intellectual Projects of the West African Past: Essays in Honour of Paulo Fernando de Moraes Farias* (https://books.google.ca/books?id=iJByDwAAQBAJ). BRILL. 2018-07-26. ISBN 978-90-04-38018-9.
17. Dolphyne, Florence (1988). *The Akan (Twi-Fante) language: Its sound systems and tonal structure*. Accra: Ghana University Press.
18. Adjaye, Sophia A. (1985). "Fante: the orthography versus speech". *Journal of the International Phonetic Association*. **15** (2): 23–33. doi:10.1017/S0025100300002954 (https://doi.org/10.1017%2FS0025100300002954). ISSN 0025-1003 (https://www.worldcat.org/issn/0025-1003). JSTOR 44525932 (https://www.jstor.org/stable/44525932).
19. Abakah, Emmanuel Nicholas (2005). "Tone Rules in Akan" (https://wikieducator.org/images/6/60/TONE_RULES_IN_AKAN.pdf) (PDF). *Journal of West African Languages*. **XXXII**: 109–134.
20. Mu, Ngyiresi Kasa (1900). *Mfantse nkasafua nkyerekyerease = Fante-English dictionary* (in Fanti). Cape Coast: Methodist Book Depot. OCLC 8344473 (https://www.worldcat.org/oclc/8344473).

External links

- Akan Language Home Page (http://www.akan.org/)
- ISO 639 code sets (http://www.sil.org/iso639-3/documentation.asp?id=fat)